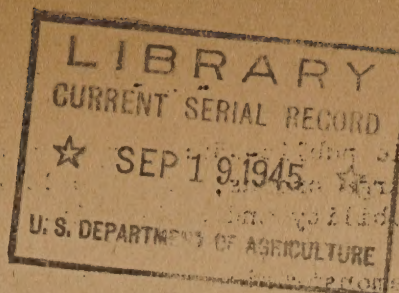


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April 4, 1945

Information Case Report No. 10

Public Relations

Subject: Washington Demonstration Days \*

Source: J. C. Knott, Director of Extension, Pullman, Washington

Objective: Improvement of farm and home practices as a result of information and ideas obtained from exhibits and demonstrated use of special equipment, labor-saving devices, and improved practices.

How Organized: The caravan of exhibits and equipment, or "guides to successful farming," made a 3-month tour of the State, holding 36 demonstration days. The premiere demonstration day was held on the campus of the State College of Washington, January 16. The caravan remained on the road through February and March. The "guides" planned in cooperation with farm leaders and organizations were demonstrated by State extension specialists and selected local leaders.

The exhibits were of two kinds: (a) Those planned and built at the State College and (b) those built by the farmers themselves--many of them from plans supplied by the Extension Service.

Exhibits included a model farmstead complete with buildings arranged for convenience and efficiency; a model 20-acre poultry farm, including dwelling, egg house, laying houses, small barn, portable brooder, and even fences; a model milk house with proper equipment; profiles of soil types as they influence farm incomes; an army jeep with trailer attachment and farm implements; a home-made garden tractor; a fruit-tree display showing the value of approved practices in pruning and fertilization; a full-sized model vegetable and fruit storage unit; a full-size utility room which combined the washing, ironing, and sewing centers; a display of materials needed for a farm freezing plant; and a food carnival. The carnival included a ferris wheel of good freezer-locker containers and a merry-go-round of good home-canned foods and different kinds of spoiled or discolored canned foods.

Demonstrations included cattle grub control, hot-iron dehorning of calves, inheritance in dairy cows, control of mastitis, and use of significant home-made labor-saving devices. The later demonstrations were given entirely by farm people.

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\* For further explanation see story, "Demonstration Day in Washington," in Extension Service Review, March 1945.



A portable public-address system made the demonstrators audible to the large crowds, and a potluck dinner added a note of informal sociability and fellowship.

Results:

The 36 demonstration days were attended by 41,525 persons. "Farm folks who attended . . . have been unanimously of the opinion that it was not only a good show but that it did have a great deal of material that was valuable to them and would be very helpful in improving their farm and home practices. . . . County commissioners . . . were very enthusiastic about it. . . . Several of the agents from adjoining States have attended and have been universally high in their praise of it."

Information Build-up: Plugs in the news and radio releases prepared by the State extension information staff, posters and stories in local papers. Advance copy material telling the purpose and value of demonstration days, and giving descriptive accounts of all the various exhibits and demonstrations, was sent to the county agents several weeks ahead of the scheduled performances. Some was fill-in material which, with slight adaptation, could be used by the agent on the radio or in local papers. At every opportunity both State and county staff members, speaking before groups or on the radio, aided in the information build-up.

Information Follow-up: Article prepared by members of State information staff for use in Extension Service Review. Richard Bell of Seattle, editor of Washcoegg, agricultural publication, and former acting extension editor, was invited to attend one or more of the demonstration days to obtain good pictures and information for feature articles to be used in some of the larger national farm papers. Popular Mechanics carried an article in its February issue prepared by a member of its own staff. A summary article giving total attendance figures and facts appeared in each of three Washington Extension mimeographed publications, Agricultural News, Farmcasts, and Home Economics News, and they were sent to dailies and farm papers on the regular mailing lists. These same articles, together with pictures and a collection of newspaper and radio releases which had been circulated earlier and which included information in detail concerning the individual demonstrations, were sent in a bundle to the Northwest Farm News, Bellingham, Wash., shortly after the program was ended. An additional follow-up story, giving in detail an account of each demonstration, as well as an over-all review of the purpose and success of the program, was submitted the week ending April 28 to selected publications in the State such as the Washington Farmer and the Grange News. With the story went pictures and mats.

Public Relations Significance: The caravan aroused the public interest always stimulated by a good show. As pointed out by the farm people themselves the demonstration days were more than merely a good



show. Although having the dramatic quality of a carnival and the visual impact of a stage show, the demonstrations and exhibits taught and informed while providing entertainment. The selection of local people to demonstrate the use of their own and the other equipment displayed served to localize the entire event as well as to stimulate their neighbors to adopt labor-saving practices. Happily the caravan seemed to achieve this primary purpose at the same time it served to acquaint the general public with some of the work and methods of the Extension Service.

Comments

The State College demonstration days this year, with the theme "Guides to Successful Farming," succeeded far beyond our fondest hopes. The attendance has been exceptional and the interest has been keen. What is more important, the people have not been disappointed but have been highly enthusiastic about the value of the demonstrations after they have seen them.

The farm people had an opportunity to participate in the planning of these demonstration days; also in putting on the demonstrations. I feel if these demonstration days had been merely a good show, like a carnival, they would not have been worth the time, effort, and money. Their value will largely be determined by the adoption of ideas by farm folks. The farm folks did get many ideas from these demonstration days that have already been used on their farms.

It also served another purpose and that was drawing the attention of the farm people to the additional information that is available from the Extension Service. The demonstration days were something like the show window of a store. They indicated not only certain attractive things but also stimulated interest in other things that are for sale on the inside.

Many of our farm people have indicated that, in their opinion, this was the finest thing that the Extension Service has done for many years.



